

May 22, 2005

Freedom

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan

War

*Mine dogs clear
the way for safe
passage*

Page 8



Spc. Jerry T. Combes

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Vicenza, Italy, search Afghans for contraband before allowing them entrance to Kandahar Airfield. A team of Soldiers is responsible for screening each person that enters the airfield to prevent any attacks on Coalition forces supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

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Freedom Watch

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ANA gets new armored vehicles

United States donates 45 M113s and 16 M577s

By Sgt. 1st Class Mack Davis
OMC-A Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan - The Afghan National Army is getting a new look. Over the next few months, as a result of a recent equipment donation, they will appear more like their Coalition partners.

The ANA recently took delivery of 10 M113A2 armored personnel carriers from the United States at Camp Pol-e-

Charkhi on the outskirts of Kabul. This was the first shipment of vehicles with more to follow.

Lt. Col. David Braxton, logistics operations chief at the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan, said, "Based on the force structure designed for Afghanistan's internal threat, armored personnel carriers were identified as a requirement for the Afghanistan National Army."

"The U.S. M113A2s are an excess defense article, which allows them to be donated," said Braxton.

"Given the performance and popularity of the M113s around the world, it is an excellent match for the ANA's APC requirement," he said.

The M113s already have a home. They will become part of the 2nd Kandak (Battalion) Mechanized Infantry, in the 201st Corps' 3rd Brigade, located in Kabul.

The 218th Infantry Regiment of the South Carolina Army National Guard, part of Task Force Phoenix, has been tasked with training the ANA to operate and maintain the new vehicles.

According to 1st Sgt. Bobby Duggins, one of the kandak's embedded training team advisers, "The ANA soldiers are totally excited about receiving this vehicle. The M113 is a new vehicle for them and there is always a level of excitement when you introduce something new."

"Because this APC is so versatile, it can be used in many ways," added Duggins.

While the ANA will use the APCs primarily to transport troops, Duggins added that the M113 "can also be used as a squad heavy weapon (to fire mortars), and it can be used by medical units and maintenance teams going into the battlefield."



Sgt. 1st Class Mack Davis

An Afghan National Army soldier looks out from the driver's hatch of a recently donated M113A2 armored personnel carrier.

Because the 2nd Kandak Mech team was previously fielded with another APC, the Soviet BMP1, training on the M113 was a smooth transition.

Prior to the arrival of the M113s, the kandak soldiers were trained by the International Security Assistance Force's Norwegian Battle Group using five modified M113s they deployed to Afghanistan earlier this year.

According to Lt. Col. Jon Mangersnes, Norwegian Battle Group commander, "We conducted two weeks of practical training. This type of training cannot be conducted in a class room. You have to get hands on the vehicle."

The training covered the basic operation and maintenance of the M113, including how to start and maneuver, and how to manipulate the operator switches.

"It was a lot of fun for my guys," added Mangersnes. "The Afghan soldiers were very receptive to the training, and the younger soldiers are extremely proud to be in the Afghan Army."

This is not the first time the Norwegians have worked with the ANA. The battle group provides security in the Kabul area and often trains and works with the ANA.

Future training on the M113s will be provided to new soldiers during basic training at the Kabul Military Training Center by Coalition mobile training teams.



Lt. Col. Frederick Rice

Cranes are used to unload an M113A2 armored personnel carrier from its transport vehicle at Camp Pol-e-Charkhi. The APCs, donated to the Afghan National Army by the United States, will go to the 2nd Kandak (Battalion) Mechanized Infantry, in the 3rd Brigade of the 201st Corps. Over the next month, a total of 79 APCs will be delivered along with enough repair parts to sustain the vehicles for one year. The total donation is estimated to be worth \$10 million.

Taliban leader turns himself in

Najmuddin surrenders to Marines in Asadabad

By Cpl. Rich Mattingly
3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine
Regiment

KUNAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Najmuddin, a high ranking insurgent commander, swore allegiance to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on April 14 in Asadabad, agreeing to turn in his weapons and cease hostilities against Afghan and Coalition forces.

As Coalition forces hunted near the Afghan-Pakistani border for insurgent leaders, Najmuddin turned himself in to India Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, abandoning his run as one of the more elusive insurgent leaders.

The Marines received a message April 10 explaining where the commander was and his intent. The India Company leadership quickly moved to the designated location and, crossing over a bridge into the compound, finally came face-to-face with the man they were able to recognize only from an outdated photograph.

Najmuddin surrendered under the Coalition's Allegiance Program, which was offered to Taliban and Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin fighters who wished to stop fighting and start participating in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. The Allegiance Program has been replaced by the government of Afghanistan's Takhim-e Sohl, or Strengthening Peace, program, which was announced May 9 in Kabul.

"We've been working on this guy for a long time," said 1st Lt. Justin Bellman, India Company executive officer. "It was just a matter of time before either we captured him, killed him or he turned himself in. He made the right decision, and

we're going to hope that he becomes a positive force in his community."

An April 14 ceremony that was attended by nearly 300 civic and religious leaders from across Kunar Province was the first step in the process of repatriation for Najmuddin, who explained his reasons for turning himself over to the Marines through an interpreter.

"I am tired of running," said the former insurgent. "I realized that my community was suffering because of [our] attacks on the Coalition and I did not want that anymore."

His participation in the Allegiance Program came on the heels of extensive Marine operations in the areas Najmuddin was known to frequent in the Pech Valley.

"This individual orchestrated several attacks against Coalition forces before we got here and began to conduct attacks against us in Nagalam from the moment we arrived. It did not take us long to let him know that we were not going to sit back and take that," said Lt. Col. Norm Cooling, battalion commander. "Instead we took the fight to his backyard, to the difficult, cold and mountainous terrain of the Korangal Valley - a place where roads do not take you and a place where Coalition forces had not gone for any length of time before."

The Marines of India Company, given the task of eliminating the threat

Najmuddin posed to stability in the area, applied constant pressure on him for two and a half months.

"In that time, he didn't have time to conduct attacks against our installations," Cooling said. "He was too busy trying to survive and he finally got tired of it."

While he said the constant presence of well-trained Marines was the ultimate reason he turned himself in, the humanitarian and rehabilitation projects in his area that Marines participated in

also convinced the insurgent leader to come forth.

Bellman, who spoke with Najmuddin, said he expressed happiness with many of the good things he saw the

Marines doing in the Pech Valley and that he knew his area was improving because of the Afghan and Coalition forces.

Najmuddin was greeted warmly by everyone in attendance at the shura (a meeting of Afghan elders, religious leaders and government officials) that coincided with the ceremony. Both he and the community leaders expressed a desire for peace.

After giving a short speech, he was sworn to uphold his end of the agreement by the governor of Kunar. Capt. Jim Sweeney, India Company commander, was present for the ceremony and signed the official document as a witness.

"He has sworn to cooperate with the government,"

said Sweeney. "Once he's in the program, he has to meet with community leaders, elders and Coalition forces on a regular basis to check in."

The governor of Kunar, Asadollah Wafa, said the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan wants the program to put an end to local insurgencies and further drive a wedge between Afghans and the foreign terrorists who have been operating in Afghanistan. By accepting insurgent "middlemen" like Najmuddin, he hopes the money and support that keeps the insurgency alive in eastern Afghanistan will dry up.

The Allegiance Program was an effort to bring many formerly prominent Afghans back into the fold of the new government, he said. As long as an individual has committed no crimes against humanity, he may get a second chance at citizenship.

"Everyone is happy that he finally turned himself in. The community supports his decision to do so, and I think that will make a big difference in how some other Taliban fighters react to us," Sweeney said.

"A lot of people want to come forward," said Najmuddin. "They are scared because they're not sure what will happen once they come forward. Once they see how well I have been treated, they will decide to turn themselves in."

Sweeney expressed hope that Najmuddin is only the latest in a line of insurgents who will lay down their arms and cooperate with the Afghan government. To facilitate that, the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, or "America's Battalion," will continue its aggressive operations throughout the eastern region of Afghanistan.

"I am tired of running. I realized that my community was suffering because of [our] attacks on the Coalition and I did not want that anymore."

Najmuddin

Tahkim-e Solh program

Government urges fugitives to repatriate to peaceful society

CFC-A

Public Affairs Office

KABUL, Afghanistan - Professor Sibghatullah Al-Mojaddedi officially announced the Tahkim-e Solh, or Strengthening Peace, program May 9 in a press conference at the Intercontinental Hotel here.

Tahkim-e Solh is a Government of Afghanistan initiative to repatriate non-criminal combatants and insurgents, such as members of the Taliban, Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin and other anti-Coalition militia, and bring them back into Afghan society.



Professor Sibghatullah Al-Mojaddedi speaks on the purpose of the Strengthening Peace Program. Al-Mojaddedi was among the first Afghan leaders to denounce the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

Al-Mojaddedi discussed the charter of Afghan President Hamid Karzai that led to the development of the Tahkim-e Solh Commission, which will operate the program. He spoke of the process to "help unite Afghanistan and guarantee our country's sovereignty, peace, stability, and a secure environment for all Afghans."

In remarks on the pro-



Members of the commission for the Strengthening Peace Program gather May 9 to hear Professor Sibghatullah Al-Mojaddedi. Al-Mojaddedi spoke on the current and future activities of the program.

gram in Strasbourg, France, on May 10, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said, "That offer is there to all. Those who are part of Al-Qaeda, those who are part of terrorism, they will not come anyway because there is no place for them. But anybody that wants to move away from being used against our country and wants to live a legitimate life in Afghanistan is welcome."

Karzai explained that Al-Mojaddedi's commission is studying ways to bring peace and stability to all of Afghanistan. He said the ultimate goal of the amnesty program is to give all willing Afghans a chance to join in a peaceful political process.

Al-Mojaddedi closed his press conference by encouraging Afghans to live together as brothers as their grandfathers did in the past and to not allow enemies to break them apart.

Enduring Voices

What is the most important thing you have done in support of OEF?



Army 1st Lt. Jeff Horton
159th Medical Company Air Ambulance
"Last month, my crew hoisted an Afghan Special Forces soldier from a ridge. The patient lived thanks to how quickly we responded."



Marine Sgt. Matthew Seeker
Tactical Warfare Squadron 3
"Keeping the Prowler jets operational is the one thing I'm proud of. The Prowlers have an important job here, and knowing I'm part of that is rewarding."



Army Dr. (Cpt.) Tony Serranoradin
249th General Hospital
"I'm most proud of helping service members and Afghans get better."



German Army Staff Sgt. Mike Poppendieck
2nd Division ISAF
"Making sure all the German radios in Kabul work, because communication is key in a war zone."

Air Force provides close air support for patrol in Paktika

By Sgt. Douglas DeMaio
20th Public Affairs Detachment

PAKTIKA PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Air Force air and ground combat support elements accompanied infantrymen from 1st Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment, during a presence patrol in the mountainous region of Paktika Province May 6.

Air Force joint terminal attack controllers or JTACs, who are attached to an Army unit to coordinate close air support for ground movements, worked closely with an A-10 Thunderbolt II that soared above the patrol.

"Before the war started, not many people even knew there were even Air Force people attached to the Army," said Air Force Staff Sgt.

Ezekiel Rodriguez, Detachment 1, 4th Air Support Operations Squadron, Vicenza, Italy. "Now that there are two wars going on in two theaters, a lot more people know about JTACs."

JTACs train, live and work with infantry units.

"It's fun," said Rodriguez, who is serving in his third deployment. "You're not sitting back on a base. You're

actually outside the wire meeting the people and seeing the region. I wouldn't want to do anything else."

It takes three years. To become a JTAC, it takes three years.

Rodriguez and his apprentice, Airman 1st Class Chad Williams, from Detachment 1, 1st Air Support Operations Squadron, Freiburg, Germany, sharpened their skills as they convoyed to the remote village of Nakah with the patrol.

The coordination the JTACs made with the A-10 Thunderbolt II gave the patrol a three-dimensional view of the battlefield as they left Orgun-E for the day-long mission, Rodriguez said, "Basically we use CAS in this area as a reconnaissance tool," Rodriguez said.

"We really haven't used it for its primary purpose, but I guess the way this war is going here, its purpose is recon," said Rodriguez.

On a day-to-day basis, 1-508th goes out on presence patrols to reinforce security in Paktika Province.

"The people know that the 508th is here," Rodriguez said. "They know they are always on patrols. Every time they roll out, there is always a bird up above."

Providing CAS for the 1-508th lets the enemy know that the Coalition is armed and looking to keep Paktika secure, Williams said.

"The main thing we bring to the battle is airpower, just a show of force to let the enemy know we are here," Williams said.



(Top) Staff Sgt. Ezekiel Rodriguez, Detachment 1, 4th Air Support Operations Squadron, Vicenza, Italy, looks up for close air support the unit provided for an A Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment (Airborne) presence patrol in Paktika Province.

(Right) Airmen 1st Class Chad Williams, Detachment 1, 1st Air Support Operations Squadron, Freiburg, Germany, operates a radio the unit uses to provide close air support.

“Sick call” held for Afghans at new clinic run by FOB Salerno

By Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
CTF Thunder Public Affairs

FOB SALERNO, Afghanistan - Medics from Forward Operating Base Salerno opened a new clinic just outside the base May 5 by treating 100 Afghans as part of a medical cooperative assistance program.

Medics from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment and the Salerno Hospital, along with two local doctors saw the patients.

This was the first MEDCAP at the clinic, which was completed April 25 at a cost of about \$20,000.

Sgt. Frank Gervascio, a medic from HHC, was one of those treating patients at the MEDCAP. He said missions like this are important and should be continued.

"Yes, we could just give the supplies to the locals. And they could treat them perfectly fine. This way they see the

Soldiers interaction with the locals and that we're concerned about them," he said.

The 24-year-old St. Louis native said he and his fellow medics only see one or two sick-call patients a day at the base, so missions like this allow them to practice their skills.

"Here, you can see anywhere from 100 to 200 people in a matter of three hours. (The medics) can learn their medications and also what's going on in the local community that could affect the Soldiers themselves," he said.



Sgt. Frank Gervascio, a medic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, hands medicine to an Afghan man May 5 at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.



Dr. (Capt.) David Harper, battalion surgeon for the 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, examines an Afghan boy's injured leg May 5 at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.

Photos Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

side with more experienced doctors. One of the two doctors at the MEDCAP was Dr. Bashir, a general surgeon, who has been working with the hospital for about nine months.

Bashir said missions like this are crucial because most Afghans can't afford health care.

He also said when locals see American Soldiers helping Afghans, it reinforces to them that Americans are their friends.

"If we have this medical treatment free for the local people here, I think that will be the main cause in creating love between the American Soldiers and Afghan people," Bashir said.

In addition to his duties as a doctor, Bashir said he also teaches personnel at the hospital local languages and customs.

Weapons Rack

Weapon maintenance is not just about cleaning a rifle, pistol or other firearm before a mission or when it is dirty. The job is designed to keep the weapon functioning reliably so that you can close with and kill the enemy.

This task goes beyond simply putting a patch down the barrel, cleaning the receiver and lubricating the appropriate parts. It also includes rotating and cleaning ammunition, disassembling magazines and checking for proper spring tensions, and checking other issued parts or components used with the weapon.

**If you don't take the time to make it work,
it is not going to work.**

Sgt. Matthew MacRoberts
20th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldier's best friend

By Spc. Jason Krawczyk
20th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Dogs are known as man's best friends because of their devotion and their ability to help humans in daily life.

In Afghanistan, man's best friend has taken on a new role in the fight against terrorism - mine detection.

The 67th Mine Dog Detachment is the only unit in U.S. Army history to

utilize dogs for mine detection only.

"Our dogs don't do anything but detect mines. In Vietnam, there were dogs that did mine work, but they also cleared caves and searched for drugs," said Staff Sgt. Parker Gibson, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the 67th at Bagram Airfield. "We are the first unit fully devoted to mine dogs. Having a dog trained in just one task

their nose," said Gibson.

When the dog detects something, it immediately sits between the mine and the handler. "After sitting, the dog waits for his reward, a cong (rubber ball) or tennis ball," said Gibson.

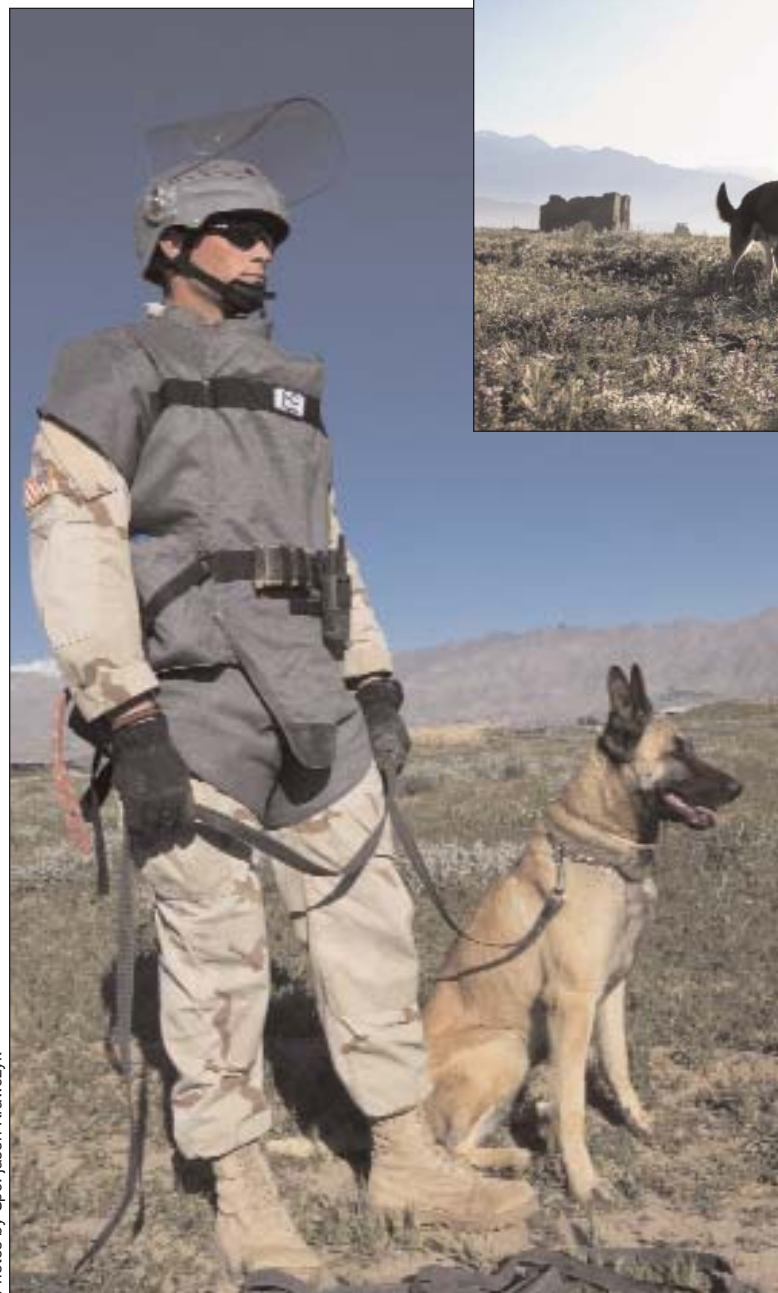
"The dogs can usually cover about 350 meters an hour, and work four to five hours depending on weather," said Gibson.

Weather is a major factor when working with the dogs, said Gibson. If it is too hot or cold, the dogs can't work. The cold, wind and rain affect the scent

mines give off and heat limits the amount of time a dog can work.

"Knowing your dogs and their capabilities is a major part of any good demining dog team," said Spc. Russell Whitfield, a dog handler with the 67th.

The relationship between the dog and his handler is built from the first day of a nine-month training



Staff Sgt. Parker Gibson, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 67th Mine Dog Detachment, and his dog Lika wait to go into a suspected mine field and start looking for explosives.



Ronny, a dog with the 67th Mine Dog Detachment, searches for mines at Bagram Airfield as Spc. Russell Whitfield, his handler, guides him on the to search.

makes the dog more effective," he said.

A typical day for a mine clearing dog team starts before the sunrise.

Three teams head to the site around 4:45 a.m. At first light, the Soldiers put on their personal protective equipment, attach a leash to the dog and get to work.

"The dogs only need one tool to do their job -

program.

"We get the dogs when they are about one to two years old, and from that moment until we leave the unit, we do everything from feed and bathe them to clean their kennels," said Gibson. "Even the amount of leave we take is limited, because it could affect our bond with the dog."

All the dog handlers started their military career as combat engineers and volunteered to be mine dog handlers after graduating from advanced individual training. Volunteering to follow a dog through a mine field takes a brave person, and they must trust their dog 100 percent, said Gibson.

The dogs have found more than 500 pieces of unexploded ordnance and six landmines, said Gibson.

Mine detecting dogs have proven to be highly effective, mobile, efficient and affordable. Dogs are able to work in about 90 percent of the terrain where humans operate, whereas flails, rollers, and sifters are only able to operate in a fraction of that amount.



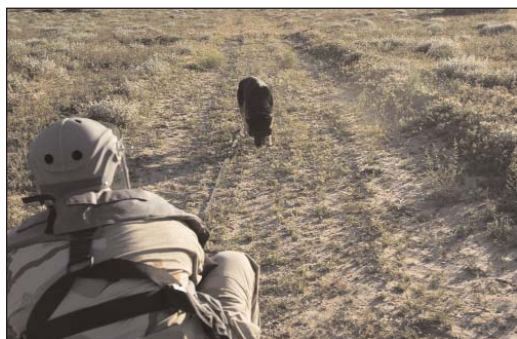
Spc. Russell Whitfield, a dog handler with the 67th MDD, helps Staff Sgt. Parker Gibson don his personal protective equipment.



Ronny sniffs for mines May 11 at Bagram Airfield.



Spc. Russell Whitfield and Ronny search the edge of a dirt road for mines or other explosive devices.



Ronny works his way back to Spc. Russell Whitfield, his handler, in a suspected minefield.



Just after sunrise, Spc. Russell Whitfield surveys a suspected mine field with his dog Ronny. Shortly after, they entered the field and began working.

Coalition funds rebuilding of mosque

Village repairs damage from anti-Coalition attack

By Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
CTF Thunder Public Affairs

KHODIGI KALAY, Afghanistan - Members of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team attended a press conference April 27 that marked the start of reconstruction on a mosque and houses damaged by an enemy rocket attack.

The PRT is providing \$22,000 for the work. The buildings will be restored to a state better than before the attack.

Enemy fighters fired the rockets at Forward Operating Base Salerno on March 22. They missed their target; one hit within three feet of the mosque in the village of Khadigi Kalay, spraying shrapnel across the front of the mosque. Another damaged three village houses.

Speaking at the press conference, Maj. Carl Hollister, commander of the Khowst PRT, said the members of the PRT are happy to be a part of helping to refurbish the mosque.

"The carelessness with which Al Qaeda acts against its brothers in Islam remains a mystery to those of us from the West," he said. "In this town full of proud Afghans, it is the friendship between the Coalition, the Afghan people and the provincial government that is focusing

all our energies on this mosque to make it even better than it was before."

Hollister said this project should be seen as another example that the Coalition is a friend of Islam, and is not here to destroy.

"I hope by our involvement in refurbishing this mosque, you'll see that our hearts are true, that we want to be your friends and we are not against Islam," said Hollister. "We support Islam."

Hollister told those in attendance that Afghanistan is their nation, and they need to take charge of it now.

"No more sanctuary to Al Qaeda," he said. "It's time for them to admit defeat so that you can continue to raise your children in peace and make a better future for all of you."

Mullah Azharudin, director of the Hajj - the department that oversees all the mosques in Khowst Province - said it had been a while since he

heard news like that of the mosque being hit by a rocket. "In Afghanistan, the security has improved for the last one or two years, but once we heard that the mosque was hit by a rocket, we were

mosque themselves, but they are very happy that the Coalition is going to help. He said this is an example



Photos by Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

A village elder in Khodigi Kalay places a ceremonial brick in the ground during a press conference April 27 to mark the reconstruction of a mosque that was damaged by an enemy rocket aimed at Forward Operating Base Salerno.



The exterior of the mosque in Khodigi Kalay still bears the scars from the shrapnel of an enemy rocket that landed a few feet away on March 22.

the Coalition, the Afghan people and the provincial government that is focusing

heard news like that of the mosque being hit by a rocket. "In Afghanistan, the securi-

through an interpreter. Azharudin said villagers were going to rebuild the

very unhappy. We were very disappointed with whoever did this," he said that the Coalition definitely isn't in Afghanistan to destroy Islam.

"The Coalition forces are not anti-Islam because they are currently working on the mosque," he said.

Azharudin said if the Coalition continues to work with the mullahs, he's sure there will be fewer problems in Afghanistan.

U.S. ambassador attends mausoleum opening

By Staff Sgt. Jacob Caldwell
CTF Bayonet Public Affairs

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 4 at the Zarghona Mausoleum near Kandahar to mark the reopening of a historic shrine in the Arghandab Valley.

The \$110,000 project began in November and lacks only some minor work which should be completed in the next six weeks. The shrine fell into disrepair during Afghanistan's war with the Soviet Union. AA Eagle, a locally owned construction company, did the majority of the work on the project.

Khalilzad, a native of the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif, was the keynote speaker for the event.

"Today is another good day for Afghanistan," said Khalilzad. "Today we honor Zarghona Ana, a symbol of Afghan pride and unity. Ahmad Shah Baba dedicated this mausoleum to his mother's memory 246 years ago. Since that time, watching over the Afghan people from the banks of the Arghandab River, she has seen great successes, periods of peace and even prosperity in a region of great influence throughout the great history of Afghanistan."

He also made a point to thank the sol-

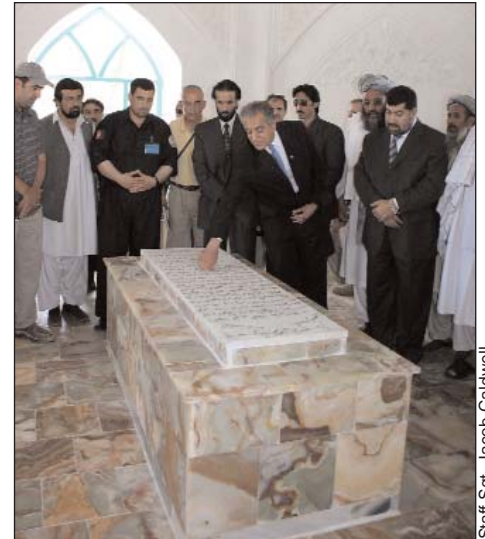
diers from the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team who were involved in the project.

"Thank for your work in adding to the beauty and pride of Zarghona Ana and Kandahar with this superb restoration of one of Afghanistan's treasures," said Khalilzad. "Thank you for your service, coming from so far away from your homes to serve our national security interests in a strategically vital region of the world."

"You are also doing something noble," he continued. "Your role in helping the Afghan people rebuild after a difficult period has already produced successes and given hope to millions of Afghans. The restoration of this mausoleum is fitting tribute to Afghans as they enter a new spring in this time of rebirth."

"This shrine is dedicated to a woman who inspired her son to expand and enrich the Afghan and Pashtu culture," said Maj. Charles Bloomquist of the Kandahar PRT during the ceremony. "But she did so without being exclusive. She encouraged her son to bring in and incorporate as many people as possible and as many tribes as possible."

"It is much the same way that seven months ago, we as the Coalition sat down with the people of the Arghandab Valley and discussed the renovation of this shrine," said



Staff Sgt. Jacob Caldwell

U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad touches a monument inside the newly renovated Zarghona Mausoleum.

Bloomquist. "With great assistance from the Director of Information and Culture, the village elders of this valley, and Governor Sherzai, we came together and we had a vision. And that vision was to restore this shrine to its former grandeur."

"And while the shrine is not completely finished, it is in many ways like Afghanistan. After 27 years of war, Afghanistan is now in a period of peace and prosperity. And just as this shrine needs only the small details to be completed, Afghanistan needs to focus on those small details that will advance it, that will make this country a better country, not only for those here today, but for the children of Afghanistan."

Urinalysis Program Testing and Reporting Requirements

- When conducting monthly urinalysis testing, ensure that a minimum 10% of assigned/attached personnel are tested each month; 100% of personnel must be tested by conclusion of deployment.

- Units are strongly encouraged to utilize the urinalysis SOP located on the Alcohol & Drug Control Office Web page when preparing for and conducting urinalysis testing and preparing specimens for shipping.

- Units must go through their unit supply channels in order to acquire urinalysis testing items (see SOP for a list of necessary items and item NSNs). Alternatively, they can coordinate with their home station Installation Biochemical Test Coordinator (IBTC) to obtain supplies.

- All CJTF-76 units are required to report previous month urinalysis statistics to the CJTF-76 ADCO by the fifth of the month (reporting form provided on ADCO Web page).

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CJTF-76 Drug and Alcohol Program webpage (on SIPR): go to CJTF-76 homepage (<http://new.cjtf76.centcom.smil.mil/>), select "Special Staff", and then "ADCO."

This drill was provided by the CJTF-76 command group

Coalition builds security ANP in Surobi gets new station

By Pfc. Vincent Fusco
20th Public Affairs Detachment

SUROBI, Afghanistan - After about six weeks of work, a steel skeleton stands upon a concrete foundation in Surobi, Kabul Province.

In three more months, a new police station will stand where there was once soil and a rebar frame.

The project is being undertaken by the Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team on Bagram Airfield. It is one of a series of projects started on behalf of the Afghan Ministry of Interior, which provided the design for the police station and is responsible for training and maintaining the Afghan police force.

Police officers currently live in rented property near the new site, said Capt. David Venner, a Reservist from the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, Knoxville, Tenn., and the Civil Affairs Team A officer in charge.

The new facility will give the force a base of operations and a place to hold prisoners.

"We want to pay a lot of attention to this district and let the people know that we're allies," said Venner, who with the A team provides project manage-

ment and assistance.

The station's jurisdiction will be the entire Surobi District, located in the southeast part of Kabul.

Korean Capt. Jun-Hyong Lee, the PRT engineering officer, manages the project and makes sure everything is built to standard.

"We came in two months ago," said Lee. "The project was started in January, and will take about three or four months to complete."

One of the biggest problems in the construction was the search for a qualified contractor.

"There are not many professional engineers in Afghanistan," said Lee.

"It was difficult to find the right contractor," said Venner. "We had an open-bid process and received 50 or 60 bids. We had to choose the best."

Even when a suitable contractor was found, communication

between Afghan and Korean engineers was difficult, said Venner. To give and receive instructions, they had to be translated from Korean to English to Pashtu, and back again.

"The most positive impact we could have is we keep cooperating with the people and establish the groundwork for a good community relationship,"

said Venner.

Afghan government buildings are not built on private land or for an individual, said Venner. A government structure must be built with the intention of helping the community.

The new police station will become a welcome addition in Surobi.

"The people understand the importance of security, and that helps us interact positively with them on any issue," said Venner.

When the police station is finished, the Afghan police force will assume the responsibility of maintaining the station.

"My job's very rewarding," said Venner. "We work close to the people, and it's good to see smiles on their faces when they know we're doing something good for them."

Lee has been an engineering officer for 11 years, and this is his first time in Afghanistan. The Korean team also handles 17 other projects, including libraries, gas stations and schools.

"The whole Korean team has been a huge asset to us," said Venner. "We couldn't do our work without them."

"American Soldiers are very brave, and I know America is strong because they're patriots," said Lee. "We work harder because they're our friends."

The Parwan PRT covers the Parwan, Panshear, Kapisa and Kabul provinces, and is responsible for 39 districts in those areas.



Korean Capt. Jun-Hyong Lee, center, the Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team's engineering officer, and U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Walter Measday, right, the Civil Affairs Team A noncommissioned officer in charge, talk with an Afghan contractor about the construction progress of the police station in Surobi District April 21.



An Afghan worker perches upon a stand and tightens wire around the rebar frame during the construction of the new police station in Surobi District April 21.

JR2 connects air to ground

By Capt. Catie Hague

455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - "Out of sight, never out of range." The Joint Radio Relay team is deployed to Bagram as maintenance support for the JR2 ground communications platform - a system comparable in capability to the E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System, or AWACS.

This team - made up of three Airmen and two government contractors - is tasked with maintaining five JR2 systems strategically located at various remote sites throughout the Afghanistan area of operation.

"JR2 is used extensively for command and control in this AOR," said Tech. Sgt. Hank O'Neill, 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Squadron JR2 section chief. "It has replaced the AWACS, allowing this airborne platform to redeploy and saving an estimated \$240,000 a day."

"Our goal is to make sure all remote systems are up and running 100 percent of the time," he said. "We work with the JR2 control site at Kandahar, which dispatches us at a moment's notice to make repairs at any of the five remote locations."

Forward sites can range from an hour to 10 days away. And the team does whatever it takes to get the job done.

"We are the hitchhikers of the AOR," said Eric Anderson, 455th EMSS JR2 contract support. "We've traveled by

convoy and flown on virtually every air frame in theatre." Since JR2 systems control about 80 percent of the aircraft flying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, it's critical to keep these systems fully operational.

Whether facilitating commercial air-line transitions, or vectoring in close air support for Coalition forces on the ground, JR2 is a one-of-a-kind system designed to connect air and ground assets, said O'Neill.

"The five remote JR2 platforms maintained by our team are contained within 20- by 10- by 15-foot vans, which can be set up in about four hours and operate from anywhere," Anderson explained. "They expand command and control capability hundreds of miles."

In a recent rescue and recovery operation near Ghazni, these remote JR2 systems proved their worth.

"A dust storm grounded four helicopters in mid-April after one crashed, killing 18 people," said Anderson. "We were able to use our remote JR2s to relay critical information about the

missing aircraft and their manifests to A-10s performing airborne support for rescue and recovery efforts. Without this system, we may never have known these aircraft went down until they failed to arrive at their destination."

As stated by Staff Sgt. Cody Williams, 455th EMSS JR2 team member, the information passed by these remote communication systems can save lives.

"JR2 provides the Soldiers and



Eric Anderson

Staff Sgt. Cody Williams, 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Squadron Joint Radio Relay team member, deployed from Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, responds during a dust storm to a maintenance request at one of the remote JR2 operating sites in Afghanistan.

Marines on the ground the capability to call in air support ... to call for help," he said. "And we make sure that call gets through."



PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

CJTF-76 April photo contest winner.

2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment conduct slingload operations during Operation Devil's Backbone.

Capt. Jorn Pung

C Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, 25th Infantry Division

If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.

Marines come to the aid of Afghan children; Boy finds help, friends in America's Battalion

By Cpl. Rich Mattingly
3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines

KUNAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Children suffering from difficult-to-treat medical conditions in rural Afghanistan may have no better friend than the Marines of "America's Battalion."

Over the course of their deployment to Afghanistan, the Marines and Navy corpsmen of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, have come to the aid of several children who were not receiving treatment for serious injuries.

One teenager, Syed Ullah, recently received a prosthetic eye after Marines on patrol in Nagalam discovered his wounds.

"Last year an insurgent's 107mm rocket landed in Syed's village during an indiscriminate attack that

has become the mainstay of (the insurgents') tactics," said 1st Lt. Justin Bellman, executive officer, India Co. 3/3.

"The rocket sent shrapnel into his face and arms, disfiguring him."

"The Coalition forces flew Syed to Bagram Airfield for medical attention, but despite sewing up numerous wounds and re-constructing Syed's nose, the doctors could not save his left eye," said Bellman.

Syed, promised a prosthetic eye by the Coalition forces, went back to his village and waited. He thought he had been forgotten when Marines came upon him during a patrol through his village.

"He was told when he was injured last year that he would get a prosthetic eye," explained Bellman, "but it

never happened. It's important to show the Afghan people that no matter what unit is here, the Coalition is working together to fulfill our commitments."

With the help of the Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team and Task Force Victory, both located at Bagram Airfield, Syed was transported back to Bagram to receive an evaluation at the Egyptian Hospital. The Egyptian doctors determined that his eye socket would support a prosthetic eye.

Petty Officer 1st Class Rodrigo Martin, a Navy corpsman with 3/3, joined Syed and traveled to Kabul for the prosthetic fitting at the Nor Eye Hospital in Kabul.

"He was a bit nervous about the whole process," Martin said of Syed's reac-

tion to driving through the busy traffic of Kabul. "He's from a very small village where life is much different than it is in Kabul."

Once in Kabul, the doctors were able to examine Syed and fit him for an eye on the same day. He returned to Bagram and was homeward bound the next day. "I am very grateful for the Americans' help," Syed said through an interpreter. "My family and I will be praying for their safety." Syed even offered to work at the nearby Coalition base without pay in order to repay the favor the Marines did for him.

"We try to do everything we can for Afghans we encounter who need medical treatment," explained Martin. "Sometimes we can't help, but when we can it's a really great feeling."

Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week



How are you?

Dari

Chi-hal darid?

(Chee-hawl dah-rid)

Pashtu

Sa-hal da?

(Saw-hawl dah)

Afghan cultural tidbit

Afghan bread comes in slabs, or in round flat loaves (not to be confused with the now commonly sold Middle Eastern pita bread) that have been baked in large clay ovens called tandoors. Afghan bread is generally available in Middle Eastern grocery stores and in mainstream grocery stores in cities with large Afghan populations.

Building a better mousetrap

Service members design new satellite antenna

By Spc. Tiffany Levesque
20th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRBASE, Afghanistan - What happens when a unit's important tactical satellite antenna breaks and replacement parts can't be found?

Service members from the 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry Brigade, Task Force Victory Communications Shop found an answer.

They designed and built their own TACSAT antenna.

"The X-Wing antenna, attached to tactical vehicles, was breaking and we had replacement parts on order," said Sgt. 1st Class Alan Kakac, noncommissioned officer in charge of the communications shop. "The parts weren't getting here fast enough to replace the broken X-Wings."

Without a mobile TACSAT antenna, a unit's long-range communications abilities are severely limited, said Kakac.

"The loss of the X-Wings was affecting the mission of our provin-

cial reconstruction teams," said Maj. Tom Cole, commander of the shop. "We decided to see if we could build our own TACSAT with materials that are readily available in country."

After three test versions, they selected a final design. The team put the new TACSAT into action, and named the new TACSAT the Q36 Space Modulator, said Cole.



In response to a lack of repair parts to repair broken X-Wing antennas, service members designed their own home-built antenna, the Q36 Space Modulator.



Maj. Tom Cole, of the 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry Regiment, and Marine Lance Cpl. Patrick Ryan, both assigned to Task Force Victory, prepare the parts to build a Q36 Space Modulator in their shop.

"Our Q36 is designed around the frequency we use in theater and it outperforms other communication antennas in our area of operations," said Spc. Brien Waldron, an information management officer with the communications shop.

The Q36 is inexpensive and easy to fix, and replacement parts are readily available, said Waldron. Compared to the X-Wing, the Q36 has a more solid base, which helps it fit on tactical vehicles better.

"The shape and design of the Q36 allows for a better performance in the field because it receives an equal amount of signal around the antenna," said Sgt. Kyle Hammit, communication operations security technician.

There are requests from Coalition units around Afghanistan who want to learn how to build and use the

Q36, said Hammit. Now there are 30 known Q36s and about 10 units that know how to build them.

"We've also shared how to build the Q36 with our fellow Iowa National Guard unit members in Iraq," said Cole. "They use it in Iraq and are teaching units over there to build and use them also."

Adding to the achievements of the communications shop, Kakac rewrote the program for the high frequency radios used in theater, said Cole.

"The HF radios don't use satellites," said Kakac. "The problem was that service members had to manually find the best frequency to use."

Now, the radios automatically choose the best frequency, said Kakac. Improving the program has helped to improve non-satellite, long-range communications in Afghanistan.

Freedom Watch

May 22, 2005

The heights of great men reached
and kept, were not obtained by
sudden flight. But they, while their
companions slept, were toiling
upward in the night.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow